

**“LIVABLE DELAWARE”
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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Section I

Introduction

The Department of Education has many initiatives that have a profound effect on the school system and an impact on “Livable Delaware”. Some of these initiatives include:

- Rigorous State Content Standards in 14 Program Areas
- Programs for Student, School and District Accountability
- Special Education Programs
- Extended Day, Extended Year and Saturday Programs
- Improved Educator Evaluation Systems
- Professional Development Incentives
- Improvements In School Climate
- Wellness Centers
- Availability of Higher Education and Adult Education Programs
- Prison Education Programs
- School to Work Programs
- Mentoring Programs for Staff and Students
- Internet Access For All Classrooms
- The Science Resource Center
- The Delaware Writing Project
- The Organization and Revision Of All Of The Department of Education Regulations

The Department of Education (DOE) has traditionally been less involved with land use planning than other state agencies. Our land use planning has been limited to school site selection and student transportation. Over the years, the Department has initiated a concerted effort to improve school site locations and transportation options along with improved intergovernmental coordination and relationships. This document contains recommendations for “Livable Delaware” initiatives in the area of school site selection and construction.

Section II

Recommended Program Activities

School Construction

- School Site Selection and Approval Processes
- Libraries for Schools and Communities

School Construction

School Site Selection and Approval Process

Activity/Policy/Program Name: School Site Selection and Approval

Contact Person: Nicholas Vacirca, Education Associate, School Plant Planning and Maintenance

Enabling Laws: 14 *Del. C.* § 1714, 2124, 2302, 2303 and 29 *Del. C.* § 7525

Policies: Department of Education Regulation 401 Major Capital Improvement Program, 2.0 Procedures for Approval of a Site for School Construction.

History/Current Situation: Previous to 1998, school locations were determined by what property was available or currently owned, and district feeder patterns. In 1998, the Department of Education adopted the Land Use Planning Act (LUPA) process as a tool for evaluating school site locations. In response to “Shaping Delaware’s Future”, the Department is reviewing school sites based upon additional criteria including spending strategies, location to development, and access to public water and sewer.

Revisions/Actions Needed:

1. Compile Geographic Information Services (GIS) databases and formulate maps for planning purposes then link GIS maps to the DOE Facility Assessment website for access by all districts.
2. Promote the re-investment of funds to renovate existing school buildings currently in growth areas, and promote the redevelopment of “brownfield” sites within growth areas by giving state, county and local fee exemptions.

In addition DOE should enter into the review process as early as possible, review acreage requirements to assess if they need to be revised or waived, seek justification for school district decisions and more rigorously exercise the right to not approve the site as permitted by the 29 *Del. C.* § 7525.

3. Promote multiple school site campuses by giving state, county and local fee exemptions and by the establishment of a public water/sewer fund.

Resources Needed to Create/Revise:

1. No new resources needed.

2. Potential loss of revenue from existing state, county, and local fees.
3. Resources may be needed to establish a public water/sewer access fund.

Schedule:

1. The process to establish maps and a database is currently underway and includes the training of DOE personnel on the GIS. (July 2001 through October 2002)
2. Implementation of guidance that establishes renovations of existing schools as a priority over the rebuilding and relocation of the same school. (July 2002)
3. Fee exemptions will require legislation at the State, County and local level. (September 2003)
Encourage the construction of new schools on existing growth sites with access to public water and sewer lines. (July 2002)

Measures to Guide Progress:

1. GIS maps to support future school planning initiatives established and links added to the School Facility Assessment website.
2. Increase in the number of renovated schools.
3. Increase in the number of multiple school sites.

Interaction or Inter-relationships with Other Agencies or Units of Government:

Collaboration with the Office of State Planning Coordination, the University of Delaware, New Castle County, Kent County and Sussex County Planning Offices, DOE, local school districts and the General Assembly.

School Construction

Libraries for Schools and Communities

Activity/Policy/Program Name: Libraries for Schools and Communities

Contact Person: Denise D. Allen

Enabling Laws: none

Policies: none

History: The new Middletown High School in the Appoquinimink School District was the first in the state to combine a public library with a school library media center. Currently, resources are provided jointly by the Appoquinimink School District, the state, and the county. For most students in Delaware the prime source for reading material, electronic and print reference material is their school library media center. It also enables the community to access the services during the evenings and weekends.

Revisions/Actions Needed: In planning new school facilities, school library media centers should be planned with a separate entrance and the school library media center should be able to be secure from the rest of the school building. A state librarian should be included in discussions for new school building so that a joint public and school library media center can be planned where feasible. Streamlining of funding procedure for joint agency building projects is also needed. Consultation with the Community Design Subcommittee of the Livable Delaware Council may also be helpful in this process.

Resources needed to create/revise: A feasibility study is needed when new schools or public libraries are constructed to calculate the benefits of opening a joint facility including a budget for expanded library collections and hours.

Schedule: Review currently scheduled building plans and see if joint school and public libraries are feasible.

Measures to guide progress: Increased planning efforts for joint facilities.

Interactions or inter-relationships with other agencies or units of government: School districts, the State Division of Libraries and county governments should be involved as well as the Community Design Subcommittee of the Livable Delaware Council.

Section III

Prioritized Legislative Agenda/Timeframe/Budget

1. Improve school site selection process. Waive state, county, and local fees for construction/renovations in designated growth zones. Promote multiple school site campuses. School sites large enough to accommodate multiple schools that are currently on private water and sewer will require public water and sewer access. (September 2003)
2. Establish a task group to review and recommend locations for school based community libraries as per the Middletown High School model or other available models. Establish rules for doing feasibility studies for opening a joint facility when new schools or public libraries are to be constructed. (September 2002)

All of the program changes outlined below are in the proposed plan for Livable Delaware from the Department of Education.

Legislative, Administrative and Budgetary Needs				
Program	Legislation Needed	Administrative Changes	Budget Needs	Timeframe
School Site Selection and Approval Process	Legislation is needed to exempt school sites from state, county and local fees if schools are built in designated growth areas and/or at multiple school sites. Legislation may be needed to establish public water/sewer access.	The % of the renovation cost as compared to the cost of new construction may need to be adjusted and guidelines may be needed to encourage multiple school sites.	The cost would vary on a case-by-case basis.	July 2002 to July 2003
Libraries for Schools and Communities	No	No	The cost would vary on a case-by-case basis.	September 2002

Section IV

Intra and Inter-Governmental Implications

School Construction – The issues surrounding school construction will include work accomplished at the DOE, as well as a collaborative effort among the Department of Administrative Services Division of Facilities Management, school districts, the State Budget Office, and the Office of State Planning Coordination. Additional working groups of state, local and municipal leadership will be required. The issues surrounding school/community library centers will include work at the DOE, as well as a collaborative effort between school districts, the Governor’s Task Force on School Libraries, Higher Education, the State Division of Libraries, and the Legislature.

Section V

E-Government Applications

The following list represents the numerous ways that the Department of Education has provided electronic access to services and information for teachers and school administrators as well as for the general public.

1. Access to all student test results for parents and schools
2. DSTP Quarterly Newsletter
3. Sample Test Items from the DSTP
4. State Content Standards in 14 Subject Areas
5. James H. Groves Program, “Diploma At a Distance”
6. Applications for Delaware Certification
7. Alternative Routes to Certification Information
8. Regulations of the Department of Education
9. School Profiles
10. Facilities Assessment Site plans
11. State Board Agendas and Minutes
12. Professional Standards Board Agendas and Minutes
13. School District Maps and a List of Transportation Supervisors
14. Bus Routes for Kent and Sussex County
15. Charter Schools
16. Delaware Code
17. New Teacher Mentoring Program Information
18. Educational Directory
19. School District Calendars
20. Higher Education Commission
21. MBNA Scholarships and Grants
22. Tech Prep Programs
23. Kent and Sussex Learning Resource Center
24. Partners in Technology (Par-Tech)
25. School District Maps
26. National Board Certification Information
27. Consolidated Grant Application
28. Department of Education Activities Calendar
29. Teach Delaware-Educational Recruitment Network
30. Department of Education Job Listing
31. Information about the Department of Education Including a Map
32. Information about The Fullbright Teacher Exchange Program
33. Exceptional Children, Information, Regulations, Special projects, Statewide Services and Staff
34. Early Childhood, Statewide Programs Services and Staff
35. Child Nutrition Statewide Programs, Services and Staff
36. Access to Other State Education Departments

- 37. Unit Count Data
- 38. Teacher Supply and Demand Data
- 39. Non-Public School Enrollment
- 40. Technology Literacy Challenge Grant Information
- 41. “DelaWISE”-Model lesson Plan Information